THE

Hearts-Index,

OR

Self-Knowledg:

Together with

I. The wonderful Change that the *Word* and *Spirit*, do work upon the *Heart*, when a Sinner is converted.

II. The excellency of *Grace* above *Nature*.

III. The *Safety* and *Calm* of such as have sued out their pardon in *Christ*.

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Section I.

PRobable it is, that that *medicine* which hath cured one desperate *Patient*, if it be communicated, may work the same effect upon others; the concealment whereof, would argue in a *Physitian*, either too *much Incre*, or too *little love*. However, the conscience of good intentions in themselves (let their success be what it will) is both a discharge and comfort to a free and willing mind.

A *fine wit*, and a *Christian will*, is like the little *Bee*, that will not off the meaneſt *flower*, until ſhe hath made ſomewhat of it: whereas an *unſanctified heart*, will (*ſpider*-like) *ſuck poyſon* from the choiſeſt of *flowers*.

Every line of *Gods word* ſhall adde ſinew to the virtuous mind, and withal heal that vice, which would be ſpringing in it. But with the carnally minded, it is far otherwiſe. The ſame report, wherewith the ſpirit of *Rahab melteth*, *hardens* the *King of Jericho*, Joſh. 2 *Sergius Paulus was converted, Elimas obdurated*, at the ſame Sermon, *Acts* 13. that one hard ſaying of our *Saviour*, John 6. like a *file ſharpened* eleven of his *Apoſtles*; while it ſo *blunted* the reſt of his *Diſciples*, that many of them *murmured, and from that time went back, and walked no more with him*, verſe 66, *&c.* Whence obſerve, that as *all bodies*, are not equally apt to be wrought upon, by the ſame *medicine*; ſo are not *all ſouls* by the *ſame means* of Grace. One remains *obſtinate* and *refractory*, whiles others are *pliable*.

Sin and *Satan*, have no *Servants* but the *ſimple*. As for inſtance: A *wiſe man* hearing in what a dangerous condition he is in, by reaſon of *original* and *actual ſins*, and how God is ſo incenſed with wrath and indignation againſt him, that he means utterly to deſtroy him, if he go on in his impenitency; *foreſeeth the evil of Hell*, and *preventeth it*, by departing from his evil wayes: but *fools go on and are careleſs*, Prov. 22. 3. and 14. 16. Stark fools indeed: For if their eyes were opened, to ſee in what a condition, they are content at preſent to continue in; they ſhould need no intreaty, to turn their courſe another way. *Luther* ſays, that if a man could perfectly ſee his own evils, and the miſery that attends them, the ſight thereof would be a perfect *Hell* unto him: and this indeed might prove to be his way to *Heaven*; For then, and not till then, a man ſees what need he hath of a *Saviour*; and then he begins rightly to prize the *joys of Heaven*, when he ſees he hath eſcaped the *Flames of Hell*, which thoſe fools before ſpoken of, never mean to do, becauſe they think themſelves *wiſe*, *good*, *happy*, and what not? The caſe of all men by Nature. And until that *vail* or *curtain* which is *drawn over their hearts*, be removed, and taken away by unfeigned *repentance*, and turning to the *Lord*, they remain

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ſtark blind to all ſaving truths, as the *Apoſtle* plainly ſets down, 2 *Cor.* 3. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. See *Rev.* 3. 17. 1 *Tim.* 6. 4. And the truth is, were it not for *pride* and *Ignorance* (ſpringing hence) every man would make it his main buſineſs, *to work out his ſalvation with fear and trembling.* But to proceed, for this is but an excurſion, let in, by way of a *parentheſis, and in zeal* for their good, that deſire not their own. The *Ninivites* by hearkning to *Jonah*, and thoſe *murtherers of the Lord of Life*, by liſtning to *Peter*, were *converted* and *ſaved*, Jonah 3. 4, 5. Acts 2. 37. *Wax* (we know) yeeldeth ſooner to the *ſeal*, than *ſteel* to the *ſtamp*.

Sect. 2. Of *Hearers*, there are uſually *four ſorts*, as our *Saviour* ſhews, in the *Parable of the ſeed*, Mat. 13. 3. to 24. As firſt, *An honeſt and good heart*, will not return from hearing the Word unbettered: yea, he will ſo note what is ſpoken to his own ſin, that it ſhall *increaſe his knowledg*, and *leſſen his vices*. As who (by looking in a *glaſs*) ſhall ſpy *ſpots* in his *face*, and will not forthwith wipe them out? A *wiſe man* will not have one ſin twice repeated unto him. Yea, he more rejoyceth, *in being overcome* with a wiſe and gracious advice, then he would have rejoyced *in a revengeful victory*. Of which we have a rare example, 1 *Sam.* 25. 32, 33. A true argument of an ingenuous nature. Whereas thoſe that will not hearken to, nor obey the voice of *Chriſt*, but rage and ſtorm; are more ſtubborn than the *wind* and *ſea*, Luke 8. 24, 25. enough to make them bluſh blood, when told of it. But

Secondly, Another ſort of *Hearers*, are like *Tully's ſtrange ſoil*; *much rain* leaves them *ſtill* as *dry as duſt*. Or the *Wolf* in the *Emblem*, which though it *ſucks the Goat*, kept notwithſtanding his *Woolfiſh nature* ſtill. And indeed, untill the *Spirit of God* meekens the *ſoul*, ſay what you will, it minds *nothing*, or *nothing* to *purpoſe*. Whatever an impenitent ſinner hears, it preſently paſſes away, like the *ſound* of a *Bell* that is rung. Let *teſtimonies* and *examples* never ſo much concern them, it makes an impreſſion but *skin*, or *ear deep*: For as in an *hour-glaſs* or *conduit*, that which in one hour *runneth in* the ſame in another hour *runneth out* again. Who may be reſembled to the *Smiths Iron*, put it into the *fire* it is much *ſoftned*, but put it into the *water* it is *harder* than before.

Thirdly, Another sort will very orderly *hear* the Word, and *delight* in it, until it comes home to their *consciences*, touches their Copy hold (as *John* served *Herod*) but then they will turn their backs upon it, as the *Jews* served our *Saviour*. John 6.66. the *Athenians*, *Paul*, Acts 17.16, to 34. and *Ahab*, *Micaiah*, 1 Kings 22 8. Now these that will not hear an *untoothsome truth*, but turn their backs upon and fly from instruction, *Job*. 3.19,20,21. not onely declare themselves to be *guilty persons* (for *he confesseth the fault, who to judgment turneth his back*: And 'tis onely the *weak sighted*, that cannot abide the *light*) but it proves them to be *out of all hope to become better*. For that sin is *past cure*, which turns *from*, and *refuseth the cure*, Deut. 17. 12. Prov 29.1. 1 Sam. 2.25. 2 Chron. 25.16. turn to the places. And take this for a *Rule*, if ever you see a *drowning man refuse help*, conclude him *a wilful murderer*.

Sect. 3. Fourthly and lastly, (for I pass by those blocks that can hear the Word powerfully delivered for twenty or thirty years together, and mind no more the *spirituality of the matter*, than the *seats* they *sit on*, or the *stones* they *tread on*.) There are a generation of hearers, who being told the naked truth, plainly reproved for their sins, shewn the judgments of God, and the due of what they deserve, and are like to undergo, if they go on, to the end they may *repent* and *believe*, that so they may be *saved*, will (*Ahab* like) *carp*, and *fret*, & *chafe*, and *fume*, and *swell*, and *spurn*, against the very *word of God*, and be ready to *burst* again for being so *sharp* and *searching*; and thereupon persecute the Messenger, as *Herodias* did *John*, and the *Pharisees*, *Christ*. They love application as dearly, as a Dog does a cudgel. So that like *Adders*, they are not only *deaf* to the *Charmer*, but like *Slow-worms*, they *hiss*, and then turn their *tails* to *sting* him.

Gods holy *precepts* and *prohibitions harden* them; as the *Sun* hardens *clay*, and *water hot iron*. Or else they inrage them, as a *furious mastiff Dog*, is the *madder for his chain*. But when it comes to this, that men spurn at the means, and are *hardned with the word*, as *steel is hardned with strokes*; or as *Bulls* grow *mad* with *baiting*: the best way is to leave them to their *Judg*, who hath *messengers of wrath*, for them that despise the *messen-*

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gers of his love, Psal. 81. 11, 12. See *Luke* 10. 10, 11. Prov. 29 & 1. 24, 25, 26, to 33. 2 Chron. 25. 16 20. 1 Sam. 2. 25. And in reason, *herbs* that are worse for *watering*, *trees* that are less *fruitful* for *digging*, *dunging*, *pruning*, are to be *rooted out*, or *hewed down* And to admonish them is to no more purpose, than if one should speak to *lifeless stones*, or *senseless plants*, or *witless beasts*: for they will *never fear* any thing, till they be in *Hell fire*. Wherefore *God* leaves them to be confuted with *fire and brimstone*, since nothing else will do it.

Sect. 4. Thus you see what a wonderful difference there is in Hearers! Onely herein they agree, all men (good and bad) *love the light as it shines*; but the most of men *hate it, as it discovers and directs*. But the difference is so great, that it is admirable to think, how some men would not be prevailed with all, though an *Angel should be sent unto them from the dead*. And yet with what small means some others have been converted, as were *Justin* the *Philosopher*, *Ciprian* the *Nicromancer*, Saint *Austin*, *Fulgentius*, *Francisco Junius*, *Malancton*, *Adrianus*, *Latimer*, and many others.

One treating upon the *Prodigal son*, and the *Thief upon the Cross*, mentions *two famous strumpets*, that were *suddenly converted* by this onely argument, that *God seeth* all things, even in the *dark*, when the *doors are shut*, and the *Curtains drawn*; and *Mountaigne* tells of a *Gallant*, that (sporting with a *Curtezan* in a house of sin) happened to ask her name, which she said was *Mary*; whereat he was so stricken with reverence and remorse, that he instantly both cast off the Harlot, and amended his whole future life. And indeed no *means* can be too weak where *God* intends *success*: yea, a thought onely hath sometimes served the turn. Nor needs there any more to a clarified understanding, than the bare thought of *Gods Ommipresence*, *Omniscience*, or *Omnipotency*; as being present every where, knowing every thought and intent of the heart, and being almighty to *punish or reward evil and good*

Sect. 5 And so much of the kinds of hearers Onely a *Question* or *Scruple* may hereupon arise. The *Minister* or *Author* out of compassion to their precious souls, would shew them from *Gods Word*, the very *faces of their hearts*, and like *Peter*

to *Cornelius*, Acts 11. tell them that, whereby (with blessing from above) they might be saved, *vers.*14. the which some do kindly entertain, as *Lot* did those *Angels* that came to fetch him out of *Sodom*, Gen. 19. Others as churlishly reject, and as villainously entreat and handle them, as the *Ammonites* did *Davids messengers*, 2 Sam. 10.4. Wherein (may some say) lies the difference?

Answ. I could give you sundry *Reasons* of it, I'le onely name a few, being injoyned to contract all my matter into two sheets.

First, *Will* makes the difference, and who makes the *difference of wills*, but he that made them? He that creates the new heart, leaves a *stone* in one bosom, puts flesh into another; and yet if *God* denies his grace, it is onely when he sees it contemned: As *God* oftentimes is so provoked, by their obstinate hardness and impenitency, that he gives them over to *Satan*, and up to the hardness of their own hearts, to be led by their lusts, and to walk in their own counsels; as it is, *Psal.*81.12. *Rom.*1.24,26. So that not *God*, but our selves, are the authors of *sin*, and of our own *damnation*, as it is, *Hos.*13.9. Of which, more in its due place.

Secondly, The holy *Word of God*, which is *Spirit* and *Life*, is so *quick*, *powerful* and *operative*, that it will have its effect: where it does not *quicken*, it *kils*. None ever heard it, but they were either *better* or *worse* by it. It is a *holy fire*; those whom it doth not *purifie* and *cleanse*, by *melting* into *repentance*, it doth *consume* and *destroy* by *burning*, into the *ashes* of *prophanness* here, of *confusion hereafter*. It is the *power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth*, Rom. 1.16. And *a sweet savour of life unto life, to them that are saved*, 2 Cor. 2.16. But it becomes *the savour of death unto death*, unto such as *wrest* and *pervert the same to their own destruction*, 2 Pet. 3.16. And no marvel, for the *same cause* may have *divers* and *contrary effects*, in respect of *sundry objects*, as might be exemplified in the Sun, the *wind*, the same *breath* out of one *mouth*, the *earth*, the *stomach*, the *rain*, &c. as might be largely shewn. In *one garden*, growes an *hundred kinds of herbs* of several operations and qualities; some *nutritive*, others *infective*; yet they all draw their juyce from one and the *same Earth*. Every *Member* received nourish-

nouriſhment from the *ſtomack*; yea, the *ſame meat* in the *ſtomack*? but that which the *Liver* receives becomes *blood*, that which the *Gall* receiveth becomes *cholar*, that which the *Lungs* receive becomes *fleam*, and that which paſſeth into the *paps* becomes *milk*: So all receive the ſame good Word of *God*, but every one does not make the ſame uſe of it. For as one hath his *faith ſtrengthened by it*, his *patience increaſed*, his *judgment reſtified*, his *will reformed*, his *life* and *practice amended*, his *love* and *zeal inflamed*: ſo fares it with wicked men, in reſpect of the contrary *vices*, *&c.* Again, the *Word of God*, is like a fructifying *dew* or *rain*, which falls not upon any ground in vain. If theſe *Celeſtial ſhowers*, fall into the *Garden* of a good heart, they raiſe up *herbs* and *flowers*; if in a *field*, *corn* or *graſs*; whereas if they fall on *clay*, they make but *dirt*; yea, the *more rain*, the *more dirt*: If upon *kennells*, or *dunghils*, a *ſtink*. Or if they produce any *fruit*, it is *weeds* inſtead of *herbs*; or perhaps *briars* and *thorns*, to *ſcratch* and *wound* the *Huſbandman* that *dreſſes* it. Thus I might go on, and ſhew you how the *Sacrament of the Lords Supper*, is recieved by one to *ſalvation*, by another to his greater *damnation*, 1 Cor. 11 29. The *cloudy pillar*, which gave *light*, and was a *defence* to *Iſrael*, became *darkneſs* and *offence* to the *Egyptians*, Exod. 14 20. And the like of *Manna*, Exod. 16 20. The *Ark*, the *Red Sea*, and ſundry the like which I might weary you with. Yea, *Chriſt* himſelf, who is a *Rock to ſave* all that *believe* in him, ſhivers his *enemies* in pieces, *Mat.* 21. 44. And *immortality*, the greateſt *bleſſedneſs* of the *Saints*, is the greateſt *miſery* to the *damned*. No wonder then, if theſe *Spiders*, thoſe *Bees*; the wicked and the godly, *ſuck*, the one *honey*, the other *poiſon* from the ſelf ſame *flower* of holy Writ.

Self. 6 Thirdly, Another reaſon why they ſo ſwell againſt their reprehender, is their *guiltineſs*. And it is a ſure ſign the *horſe is galled*, that ſtirs too much when he is touched. In the *Law of jealouſies*, if the *ſuſpected wife* were *guilty*, that drank of the bitter *waters of tryal*, ſhe would preſently *ſwell*: if otherwiſe, ſhe was well enough, *Numb* 5 27. Nor did you ever hear of any that were offended with wholſome truth for being untoothſom, that diſliked the Miniſter for being too ſharp and ſearching, but evil minds. But as *good meats* are unwelcome

to *sick persons*: so is good counsel to obstinate and resolved sinners. *Unsound flesh* loves to be *stroaked*, the least *roughness* puts it into a *rage*. *Bad wares* would have *dark shops*, *Thieves* will put out all the *lights*, that in the *dark* they may more securely *rifle* the house, *John* 3.19.20,21. So the *conscience* that is *guilty* of flagitious crimes, could wish the *Heavens* blind.

Fourthly, No wicked man can indure to hear the downright truth: For then they must also hear the *sentence* of their own *condemnation*. What the Minister delivers is the very *Word by which they are judged and condemned*, therefore they loath as much to hear it, as the *Prisoner at the Bar* does abhor to hear *his sentence* from the *just judg*. And indeed, if many (as we well know by experience) love not to hear the worst of their temporal *causes* and *cases*, nor yet of their *bodily distempers*, with which their *lives* or *estates* be endangered; how much more will wicked men decline from seeing their *hainous abominations*, and themselves *guilty of Hell and eternal damnation*? though thereof, there be an absolute necessity, if ever they be saved.

Sect. 7. And so much of the *Reasons*. From all which we may learn not to impute the *cause of wicked mens raging*, to any miscarriage in the *messenger*: for he may vindicate himself as *Paul* did, 1 *Cor.* 7.10. *I have not spoken, but the Lord*. And therefore as the *Lord* said unto *Saul*, Acts 9.4. that he persecuted him: So they which *reject any truth* delivered out of the *word*, do *resist God himself*, and not his *messenger*. And this for certain were *Christ himself* their *Minister*, they would much more oppose and persecute him, as the *Priests* and *Pharisees* did, when they heard him.

Yea, consider it rightly, and you will grant, that there cannot be a *greater honour* done to a poor *minister*, than this. For, what sayes one of the *Fathers*? It may well be doubted that *ministers open* not the *Word aright*, when *wicked men kick* not against it. Yea, sayes *Luther*, To *preach the Gospel as we ought*, is to stir up all the *furies of Hell against us*. And what saith our *Saviour* himself to his *Apostles*, in their *pupil-age*? *The World cannot hate you, but me it hateth; because I testifie of it, that the works thereof are evil*, John 7. 7. And so touching *Paul*, who had never *become their enemy*, but for *telling* them the *truth*,

and

and dealing ſo plainly, and ſo roundly with them. Nor can there be ſuch an argument, that a *Miniſter ſtudies* more to *profit*, than to *pleaſe* men with his wholſome *counſel*; as when he will not let them *ſleep* and *ſnort* in their *ſins*, but *cry aloud* againſt their *abominations*.

Secondly, We may learn from the premiſes, that if any receive the Word with readineſs, and become *new creatures* by hearing the ſame: not to attribute, or aſcribe the praiſe thereof to the *parties converted*, or to the *means* or to the *inſtrument*; but to *God*, who is the *Author*, and gives the *bleſſing*. For *Paul may plant, and Apollo may water, but it is God onely that gives the increaſe*. It is *God* alone that *giveth words unto the wiſe, and virtue unto their words*, 1 Cor. 3. 5, 6, 7. And he will give *ſucceſs to whom, when, and as he pleaſeth*. Even *twelve* mean *Fiſhermen*, when he pleaſeth, ſhall *without force*, or *weapon, armour, bands of men*, or *ſtroke ſtricken*, *ſubdue the whole world* to their *King*! *Hillary* found not ſeventeen *believers*, and left not ſo many *unbelievers* in the *whole City*.

Indeed in theſe dayes, *Miniſters* may *tear their throats, ſpend their lungs*, and *force their ſides*, in ſuing to a *deaf world*, and ſay, when they have done all they can, *Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Yea, how many painful *Peters* have complained to *fiſh all night*, and *catch nothing*? *Many profeſſors*, and *few converts*, hath been the lot of the *Goſpel* in theſe laſt times, and ſince our *means* hath exceeded. *Gods houſe* (as the *ſtreets of Jericho*) may be *thronged*, and yet but one *Zacheus* gained to the faith. And why ſo? but for this cauſe; if ſome few like the *Bee*, do *gather* from the *Word*, whatſoever addeth to their *knowledg* and *vertue*: the greateſt number, uſe the ſame as ſome do *artificial teeth*, more for *ſhew*, than *ſervice*; more for *ability of diſcourſe* than *activity of practiſe*; to *talk of it*, than to *walk by it*. Whence it is, that *God utters* his *ſaving truths*, as it were in *Parables*; ſo hiding them from the *wiſe and prudent* (namely the *proud*, that are wiſe in their own Eyes) and *reveales them to babes and ſucklings*, (that is, the *humble* and *lowly*) as *Auſtin* ſpeaks.

Sect. 8. Which being ſo, let not him that hath *five Talents*, deſpiſe

despise him that hath but *two*: Even those *great lights of Heaven*, the *Sun* and *Moon*, take not away the necessity of *lamp light*. To the making of the *Tabernacle*, *fine linnen*, and *Goats hair*, had their use; as well as *gold*, *silver*, and *precious stones*. And the same *God* that gave proportion to the *Cedar*, gave also being to the *Mushroom*.

Nor is the *strength* or *weakness of means*, either *spur* or *bridle* to the *determinate choises of God*; who not seldom does *greatest acts*, by *weakest agents*. He chose *Davids sling*, rather than *Sauls sword*, to *conquer Goliah Frogs Grashoppers*, & *Lice*, rather than *Bears* and *Lions*, to fight against *Pharaoh*. Yea, he that with *Rams horns overthrew the Walls of Jericho*, hath sometimes chosen vile and *weak means*, to serve himself by, in *great matters*. *Peter* hath a *Cock* to tell him of his *cowardise*. And *Balaam* an *Ass*, to reprove his *avarice*. Yea, that *God*, who will bless where he pleaseth; now and then gives the *greater success to the weaker means*. *The men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonas*: yet not the *Jews*, at the preaching of *Christ*, *who was greater then Jonas*. The *Apostles* did greater signs in *Christs Name*, than *Christ himself*, Joh. 14.12. It was a greater *miracle*, that the *shadow* of St. *Peter* (*as he walked in the street*) should *heal many sick persons*, Acts 5. 15, 16. than that the *hem of Christs vesture* should *heale one single woman of her bloudy Issue*, Mat. 9.21,22. Who then can cavil, or indeed wonder, at the ensuing story the which I am now to relate?

Yea, who that hath either *heart* or *brain*, shall well consider this preceding matter, and the *difference of Heavers*, and not be forced to acknowledg that which follows, to be the *case of every one* that shall hear it, be they what they will? I mean *before their hearts are renewed with the power of Gods word*, which is *the strong arm of the Lord*, *and the mighty power of God to salvation*. Rom. 1.16. *And the sword of the spirit*, Eph. 6.17. *And like as a fire*, *or an hammer that breaketh even the Rock in pieces*, Jer 23.29,30. And that irresistable *Cannon-shot*, that is *mighty to beat down all the strong holds of sin and Satan*, 2 Cor. 10. 4. *Quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, and pierceth even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joynts and marrow; and to the discerning of the very, thoughts*

thoughts, and most secret intents of the heart, Heb. 4 12.

Sect. 9. And look to it, for if thou dost not see and acknowledg the *very secrets of thy heart* to be clearly laid open to thy *conscience*, in the one or other, first or last of these ensuing *Characters*: I dare peremptorily conclude, *That Satan the God of this world, hath blinded thy mind, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine unto thee*, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. Eph. 2. 2. 2 Thes. 2. 9. 10, 11. 1 Tim. 4. 2.

But this is the misery! and a just plague upon our *so much ignorance, formality*, and *prophaness*, under our *so much means of Grace*: there be very few men, that make not the *whole Bible*, and all the *Sermons* they hear: yea the *checks of their own Consciences*, and the *motions of Gods Spirit* utterly *ineffectual*; for want of wit and grace, to *apply the same to themselves*, as they can unto others; being better able to discern *others moats*, than their *own beams*.

If you question what *Satan* can do in this case? Look upon what he hath done to others, as *wise*, and as *good*, as the best of us. Ile give you *instances*, both of the *godly* and *wicked*, and likewise *Testimonies*: I pray mind them seriously, and turn to the places, for they are exceeding considerable. In the first place take notice, how he *blinded* and *deluded Ahabs four hundred Prophets*, 1 Kings 22. 22. And *Judas*, John 13. 2. And all *Magistrates*, when they *persecute* the people of *God*, Rev. 2. 10. And indeed all men in their natural estate; whereof not a few, *think they do God good service, in persecuting and killing the Prophets*; as our *Saviour* expressly tells us, *John* 16 2. But see other particular instances, as that of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, Acts 5. 3. Then for the *godly*, how he hath blinded and beguiled them, as our first *Parents*, *Adam* and *Eve*; *Eve by himself*, and *Adam* by making *her* his instrument; and that *in the state of innocency*, when they had *wit at will*, Gen. 3. And *holy David, a man after Gods own heart*, 1 Chron. 21. 1. Then *Peter*, who so dearly loved *Christ*, Mat. 16. 22, 23.

And having this done, argue thus with thy self; If *Satan* so blinded and besotted these; if he made such use of all these, whereof some were the best and wisest of *Gods* children and servants, who *hate the very appearance of evil*, 1 Thes. 5 22.

Jude

Jude 23. Ephes. 5.27. 2 Pet 3.14. James 1.27. *Have the eye of faith, and the spirits direction, and know the mind of Christ above others,* 1 Cor. 2.12, to 17. John 10.14. How much more can he work the same upon his own children and servants? that delight onely in wickedness, and are *ignorant of Satans wiles,* as not having the least knowledge or ability to *discern spiritual things,* 1 Cor. 2.14. 2 Cor. 4.4.

But if you still question the truth of this, turn to *Joh.* 14.30. and 12.31. *Gen* 3.15. *John.* 8.44. 2 *Tim* 2.20. *Eph.* 2.2,3. which are such clear testimonies, that none (who *shut* not their *eyes* against the *light*) can gainsay, *Mat.* 13.15.

Which being so, in reading this ensuing *Dialogue* or *Index of the heart, Make* the *application* to *your selves* and *not to others*; as *David* did *Nathans parable,* 2 Sam. 12.1, to 8. And *Ahab* the *Prophets,* 1 Kings 20.39, to 43. which yet concerned no less then their own lives. And so much the rather, for that in all probability, what this will not effect touching your amendment no ordinary means are like to doe. As what can be further expected? No *glass* can more lively represent *your faces,* than this Book does your *hearts,* if you be yet in your *natural condition, unregenerate.* Neither can you look that *Christ Jesus* himself should call to you severally by name as he did to *Saul*; for now we have the *Gospel* written at large: *Visions* and *Miracles* cease. Or put case *Christ himself* should do so, I question whether you would be any more warned, or reclaimed by it, than *Hazael* was, when the *Prophet* told him, what abominable wickedness he should shortly commit, 2 *Kings* 8.12,13, &c. Yea, *Abraham* tells *Dives* the contrary, *Luke* 13 31. And so I come to the *Conference* it self.

Sect. 10. A *loose Libertine* meeting with his friend that had lately been a *formal Christian,* he greets him as followeth:

Sir! Me thinks I have observed in you a strange alteration, since our last meeting at *Middleborough*: not onely in your behaviour, company, and converse? but even in your countenance: What is the matter if I may be so bold?

Convert. Truly Sir, you are not at all mistaken, nor am I unwilling to acquaint you with the cause, if you can afford to hear it.

Soon

Soon after my return into *England*, I was carried by a friend to hear a *Sermon*, where the *Minister* so represented the very *thoughts, secrets*, and *deceitfulness* of my *heart* unto my *conscience*, that I could not but say of him, as the *Woman* of *Samaria* once spake of *our Saviour*; *He hath told me all things that ever I did.* Which made me conclude with that *unbeliever*, 1 Cor. 14. 24,25. *That God was in him of a truth*: nor could he ever have so done, *if he were not of God*, as the *Young man* in the *Gospel* reasoned with the *Pharisees*, touching *Jesus*, when he had *opened his eyes that had been blind from his birth*, John 9. 32, 33. Whereupon I could have no peace nor rest, until I had further communed with him about my estate; for I found my self in a lost condition touching *Eternity*: It faring with me, as it did with those *Jews*, Acts 2. when *Peter* by his searching Sermon had convinced them, that *Christ, whom they had by wicked hands crucified and slain, was the onely Son of God, and Lord of glory*, verse 36, 37. And having had the happiness to injoy the benefit of his sage advice, as I stood in need thereof, (*God* having given him *the tongue of the learned to administer a word in season to them that are weary*, Isa. 50. 4.) I bless *God* his *word* and *spirit* hath wrought in me such a change and strange alteration, that it hath *opened mine eyes* that were *blind* before, *inclined* my *will* to *obedience*, which before was *rebellious*, *softned* my *heart*, *sanctified*, and *quite changed* my *affections*: so that I now *love* that *good* which before I *hated*, and *hate* that *evil* which before I *loved*; and am *delighted* with those *holy exercises*, which heretofore did most *displease me*; and am *displeased* with those *vain pleasures* and *filthy sins* which in times past did most *delight* me. Which is such a mercy, that no tongue is able to express! for till that hour, I went on in the *broad way*, and *worlds road to destruction*, without any *mistrust*, whereas now *God* hath been pleased to take me into his *kingdom of grace here*, & will never leave me, until he hath brought me to his *kingdom of glory hereafter.*

Loose Libertine. What you speak makes me wonder: for I ever held you the compleatest man of my acquaintance; *just* in all your *dealings*, *temperate* and *civil* in your *deportment*; yea, I have never seen you exceed in the least, nor heard you *swear* an *oath*, except *faith* and *truth*, and that very rarely. Besides you

have

have been a good *Protestant*, and gon to *Church* all your days.

Convert. What you speak, none that know me can contradict; nor could they ever accuse me of any scandalous crime, or unjust act. Yea, I had the same thoughts of my self; and should any one have told me formerly, that I was such a *great sinner*, such a *devil incarnate* as I was: I should have replied as *Hazael* did to the *Prophet* (telling him of the abominable wickedness he would ere long commit) *What am I a dog, &c.* 2 Kings 8. 12, 13. And no wonder, for as every *man* in his *natural condition* is *stark blind to spiritual objects*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. so *the heart of man is deceitful above all things*: even so deceitful, that *none* but *God* alone can *know* it, as the *Prophet* shews, *Jer.* 17. 10. But because this is a truth that transcends your belief, and because it may be of singular use to you also, to know the same: I will give you a short *character* of my former condition; the which done, I doubt not but you will assent unto what I have hitherto said, or shall further relate.

Sect. 11. First, Touching my knowledge, (I mean *saving knowledg*, without which the *soul cannot be good*, as wise *Solomon* witnesseth, *Prov.* 19. 2.) it was such, though I thought my self wiser than to make scruple of, or perplex my self about matters of *Religion*, as do the *religious*: even as the King of *Tyrus* thought himself *wiser than Daniel*, Ezek. 28. 3. that *spiritual things* were mostly represented to my understanding false, and clean contrary to what they are indeed. (Like *corporal things* in a *looking glass*, wherein those that are on the *right hand* seem to be on the *left*, and those that are on the *left hand* seem to be on the *right*. As it fared with St. *Paul*, while he was in his natural condition. *Acts* 26. 9. which made me think and call *evil, good*; and *good, evil*; *bitter, sweet*; and *sweet, bitter*; to *justifie the wicked*, and *condemn the just*, as the Prophet complains, *Isa.* 5. 20, 23.

As for instance, I most sottishly thought, that I both *loved* and *served God* as I ought; yea, I should have taken it in foul scorn, if any one had questioned the same; when indeed I was a *traytor to God, and took up arms against all that did worship him in spirit and in truth*. I was so far from *loving* and *serving him*, that I *hated* those that *did it*; and that for their so *doing*. I could also

also hear him *blasphemed*, *reproached*, and *dishonoured*, without being once stirred or moved at it. I loved him dearly, but I could never afford to speak a word for him: And likewise his Children entirely; but instead of justifying them, or speaking in their defence when I heard them *scoft*, *scorned* and *abused* by wicked and ungodly men; all my *delight* was to *jear* at, *flight* and *slander* them wherever I came. I more *feared the Magistrate*, than I *feared God*, and more regarded the *blasts of mens breath*, then the *fire*, *of Gods wrath*. I chose rather to *disobey God*, than to *displease great ones*; and feared more the *worlds scorns*, than *his anger*.

And the like of *Christ* that died for me; a strong argument that I *loved Christ*, when I *hated* all that resembled him in *holiness*. Yea, I so *hated holiness*, that I most bitterly *hated men for being holy*: insomuch that my *blood* would *rise* at the sight of a *good man*, as some stomacks will rise at the sight of *sweetmeats*. I was a *Christian in name*, but I could scoff at a *Christian indeed*. I could honour the *dead Saints* in a formal profession, while I worried the *living Saints* in a cruel *persecution*. I condemned all for *Roundheads*, that had more religion than a *Heathen*, or knowledg of *Heavenly things*, than a *child in the womb* hath of *the things of this life*, or *Conscience* than an *Atheist*, or care of his *soul*, than a *Beast*. I had alwaies the *basest thoughts* of the *best men*: making *ill constructions* of whatsoever they did or *spake*; as the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* dealt by our *Saviour*.

Sect. 12. As, O what a *poor slave* did I hold the man of a *tender conscience* to be! Yea, how did I applaud my self for being *zealless* and *fearless*; together with my great *discretion* and *moderation*: when I saw this man vexed for his *zeal*, that other *hated* for his *knowledg*, a third *persecuted* for the *profession* of his *Faith*, &c. For, (being like *Cain*, *Ismael*, *Eliab*, *Michol*, *Pharaoh* and *Festus*) I thought their *Religion Puritanism*, their *conscience of sin*, *hypocrisie*; their *profession*, *dissimulation*; their *prudence*, *policy*: their *faith* and *confidence*, *presumption*; their *zeal of Gods glory*, to be *pride* and *malice*, their *obedience to Gods laws*, *rebellion to Princes*; their execution of *justice*, *cruelty* &c. If they were any thing devout, or forward to admonish others, that so they *might pluck them out of the fire*; I conceived them

to

to be *beside themselves*, as *our Saviour* was thought to be by his *Kinsfolk*, and St. *Paul* by *Festus*, Mark 3. 21. John 10.20. Acts 26.24. 1 Cor.1.18. My *religion* was to oppose the *power of religion*, and my *knowledge of the truth*, to know how to *argue against the truth*. I never affected *Christs Ambassadours*, that preached the *glad tidings of salvation*, but had a spleen against them; yea, I hated a *Minister* for being a *Minister*, especially if a *godly* and *zealous* one, that spake home to my *conscience*, and told me of my *sins*; much more if he would not admit me to the *Lords Table* without *trial* and *examination*; yea, then like *Ahab* to *Eliah*, I became his *enemy*, and *hated him* ever after; would *impeach his credit*, and *detain from him his dues*. And are not all these strong evidences, that I *loved* and *served God*, and *my Redeemer* as I ought? But to make it more manifest what a rare *Christian* I was,

I thought my self a *Believer*; yea, I could boast of a *strong Faith*, when yet I fell short of the very *Devils* in *believing*: for they *believe* the *threats* and *judgments* contained in the *Word*, and *tremble* thereat. *James* 2.19. Whereas I thought them but *Scare-crows* to fright the simple withal: yea, I held *Hell* it self but a *fancy*, not worth the *fearing*:

Because I was not *notoriously wicked*, but had a *form of godliness*, was *civil*, &c I was able to delude my own soul, and put off all *reproofs* and *threatnings*, by comparing my self with those, that I presumed were worse than my self; as *Drunkards*, *Adulterers*, *Blasphemers*, *Oppressors*, *shedders of blood*, and the like; counting none wicked but such. Yea, looking upon these, I admired my *own holiness*, and thought my *moral honesty* would be sufficient to save me. Nor did I know wherein I had offended.

And whereas the *Law* is *spiritual*, and binds the *heart* from *affecting*, no less than the *hand* from *acting*: I was so *blind* and *ignorant*, that I thought the *Commandment* was not broken, if the outward gross sin be forborn. Whence these were my thoughts, I never brake the *first Commandment* of having *many gods*; for I was no *Papist*, nor *Idolater*: nor the *second*, for I worshipped *God* aright. Nor the *third*, for I had been no common swearer, only a few petty oaths. Nor the *fourth*, for I had every *Sabbath*

gone

gone duly to *Church*. Nor the *fifth*, for I ever honoured my *parents*, & have been *a loyal subject*. Nor the *sixth*, *seventh*, *eighth*, *ninth*, or *tenth*; for I never committed *murder* or *adultery*, never *stole* ought, never *bare false witness*; nor could I call to mind that I had at any time *coveted* my *neighbours wife*, *servant*, *estate*, &c. And nothing more common with me, than to brag of a *good* heart and *meaning*, of the strength of my *faith* and *hope*, of my *just* and *upright dealing*, &c. And because I abstained from notorious sins, I thought my self an excellent Christian, if *God* was not beholding to me for not wounding his Name with Oaths; for not drinking & playing out his *sabbaths*, for not railing on his *ministers*, for not *oppressing* & *persecuting* his poor *members*, &c.

Sect. 13. And yet had it been so, as I imagined: Admit I had never offended in the least all my life, either in thought, word, or deed; yet this were but one half of what I owe to *God*. this were but to observe the *negative part* of his *law*, still the *affirmative part* thereof I had been so far from performing, that I had not so much as thought of it. And to be just in the sight of *God*, and graciously accepted of him; these two things are required: the *satisfactory part to escape hell*, and the *meritorious part to get heaven*. And the true method of grace is, *Cease to do evil, learn to do well*, Isa. 1. 16, 17. The *Fig tree* was *cursed*, not for bearing *evil fruit*, but because it bare *no good*. The *evil servant* was *not bound hand and foot, and cast into prison*, for *wasting his masters goods*; but for *not gaining* with them. And those *reprobates* at the last day shall be bid *depart into everlasting fire*; not for *wronging* or *robbing* of any, but for *not giving*, for *not comforting Christs poor members*, Mat. 25. So that my case was most desperate! For though with that *Pharisee*, Luk. 18. 11. I was apt to thank *God* and *brag*, that I was *just*, *and paid every man his due*, yet I never thought of being *holy*, and of *paying God his dues*; as his due of *believing*, or *repenting*, of *new obedience*; his due of *praying*, *hearing*, *conferring*, *meditating* on his *word* and *works*, *sanctifying his sabbaths*, and *instructing* my *children* & *servants*, teaching them to fear the *Lord*. His due of *love*, *fear*, *thankfulness*, *zeal* for his *glory*, *charity* and *mercy* to *Christs poor Members*, and the like.

I should have serv'd *God* in *spirit*, & according to *Christs Gospel*: as all that are *wise hearted* indeavour to *live*, & *believe*, & *hear*,

and *invocate*, and *hope*, and *fear*, and *love*, and *worship God* in such manner as his *word* prescribes. I should have been *effectually called*, and become a *new creature* by *regeneration*, being *begotten* and *born anew* by the *immortal seed of the word*. I should have found an apparent *change* wrought in my *judgment*, *affections*, and *actions*, to what they were formerly. The *Old man* should have changed with the *New man*, *Worldly wisdom* with *Heavenly wisdom*, *carnal love* with *spiritual love*, *servile fear* for *Christian* and *Filial fear*, *idle thoughts* for *holy thoughts*, *vain words* for *holy* and *wholsom words*, *fleshly works* for *works of righteousness*: even *hating* what I formerly *loved*, and *loving* what I formerly *hated*.

But alas! I have heard the *Gospel* day after day, and year after year: which is *the strong arm of the Lord*, and the *mighty power of God to salvation*. That is *quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two Edged sword*, and yet stood it out and resisted, instead of submitting to *Christs call*; even *refusing the free offer of Grace and Salvation*. I have *heard* the Word faithfully and powerfully preached for *forty years*, yet remained in my natural condition unregenerate, without which new birth there is no being saved, as our *Saviour* affirms, *John* 3.5. I had not trodden one step in the way to conversion; for the *first part of conversion is to love them that love God*, 1 John 3.10,11,14. I should daily have *grown in grace, and in the knowledg of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*: but I was so far from growing in *grace*, that I had not one spark of *grace* or *holiness*, *without which no man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. I was all for observing the *second Table*, without respect to the *first*; or all for *outward conformity*, not at all for *spiritual* and *inward holiness of the heart*.

Sect. 14. Either what I did was not morally *good for the matter*, or not *well done for the manner*; nor to any *right ends*: as out of *duty* and *thankfulness to God and my Redeemer*, and out of *love* to my *fellow members*. Without which, the most glorious performances, and the rarest vertues, are but *shining sins*, or *beautiful abominations*. *Gods glory* was not my principal *end*, not to be *saved my greatest care*.

I was a *good civil, moral honest hypocrite*, or *infidel*; but *none* of

of these *graces grew in the garden of my heart.* I did not *shine out as a light*, by a *holy conversation to glorifie God*, and *win others.* Now onely to *refrain evil*, except a man *hates it also*, and *does* the contrary *good*, is to be *evil* still: because *honesty* without *piety*, is but a *body* without a *soul.*

All my *Religion* was either *superstition* or *formality*, or *hypocrisie*, I had a *form of Godliness, but denied the power thereof: I often drew near unto God with my mouth, and honoured him with my lips, but my heart was far from him*, Isa. 25. 13. Mark 7. 2, to 14. Mat. 15. 7, to 10. All which considered, *viz.* the *means* which *God* had afforded me, and the little use I had made thereof, left me in a far worse condition, then the very *Heathen* that never heard of *Christ.* So that it was *Gods* unspeakable mercy, that I am not at this present *frying in Hell flames, never to be freed.*

God hath sent unto us all *his servants the Prophets, rising up early, and they have been instant in preaching the Gospel, both in season, and out of season:* but my carnal *heart* hath ever been *flint unto God, wax unto Satan: You shall die* if you continue in the practise of sin, I *heard*: but *you shall not die*, (as saith the *Devil*) *I believed.*

Sect. 15. Besides all this, Suppose I had none of these to answer for; neither *sins of Commission*, nor *sins of Omission*: yet *Original sin* were enough to damn me, no need of any more; and yet my *actual transgressions* have been such, and *so many*, and my *ingratitude* therein so *great*, that it might have sunk me down with shame, and left me hopeless of ever obtaining pardon for them. As see but some small *part of my monstrous* and *devilish ingratitude to so good a God, so loving and merciful a Saviour and Redeemer*, that hath *done*, and *suffered* so much for me, even more than can either be *expressed* or *conceived*, by any *heart*, were it as deep as the *Sea!*

Touching what *God* and *Christ* hath done for me; in the first place he gave me my *self*, and all the *creatures* to serve for my use; yea he *created me after his own image in righteousness and holiness*, and in perfect *knowledg of the truth*, with a power to stand, and for ever to continue in a most blessed and happy condition. But this was nothing in comparison; for when I

was in a sad-condition; when I had *forfeited* all this, and *my self*; when by sin I had turned that *image of God* into the *image* of *Satan*, and wilfully plunged my *soul* and *body* into Eternal torments: when I was become his *enemy*, mortally *hating* him, and to my utmost *fighting against him*, and taking part with his onely enemies *Sin* and *Satan*, not having the least thought or desire of reconcilement, but a perverse and obstinate will to resist all means tending thereunto: he did redeem me, not onely without asking, but even against my will; so making of me his cursed *enemy*, a *servant*; of a *servant*, a *son*; of a *son*, an *heir*, and *coheir with Christ*, Gal. 4. 7. But how have I *requited* this so great, so superlative a *mercy*? All my recompence of *Gods love* unto me, hath been to do that which he *hates*, and to *hate* those whom he *loves*.

Christ the fountain of all good, is my *Lord* by a *manifold right*, and I his *servant by all manner of obligations*. First, he is my Lord by the right of *creation*, as being his *workmanship* made by him. Secondly, by the right of *Redemption*, being his purchase *bought* by him. Thirdly of *preservation* being kept, upheld, and maintained by him. Fourthly, his by *Vocation*, even of his *Family*, having admitted me a *member of his visible Church*. Fifthly, his also (had it not been my own fault) by *sanctification*, whereby to possess me. Lastly, he would have me of his *Court* by *glorification*, that he might *crown* me, so that I was every way his. *God* had raised me from a *beggar to a great estate*: But how did I requite him? I would not, if possible, suffer a godly and *conscientious minister* to be *chosen*, or to abide where I had to do, but to bring in one that would *flatter sin*, and *flout holiness*, *discourage the godly*, and *incourage the wicked*. I used both *my own* and all *my friends* utmost ability. Much more might be mentioned, but I fear to be tedious.

Now argue with *all the world*, and they will *conclude*, that there is *no vice like ingratitude*! But I have been more ungrateful to *God*, than can be expresst by the *best Orateur alive*. It was horrid ingratitude in the *Jews*, to scourge and crucifie *Christ*, who did them good every way; for he *healed their diseases set their bodies*, *enlightned their minds*, *of God became man*, and lived miserably amongst them many years, that he might *save* their

soul,

souls: but they fell short of my ingratitude to *God*, in that most of them were not in the least convinced, that he was the *Messias sent* from *God*, and promised from the beginning. But I have not onely denied this *Lord* that bought me, but I hated him; yea, most spitefully and maliciously fought on *Satans* and *Sins* side against him, and persecuted his children, and the truth with all my might: and all this against *knowledg* and *conscience*, after some mealure of *illumination*, which cannot be affirmed of the *Jews*. Yet miserable wretch that I was, if I could have given him my body and soul, they should have been saved by it, but he were never the better for them.

Sect. 16. Lastly, to tell you that which is more strange! Notwithstanding all this that hath been mention'd, and much more: Yet I thought my self a *good Christian forsooth*; yea, with that *young man* in the *Gospel*. I thought *I had kept all the commandments*. Nor was I a whit troubled for sin, either *original* or *actual*, but my *conscience* was at *quiet*, and I was at *peace*; neither did any sin trouble me. Yea, I would applaud my self with that *Pharisee*, Luke 18. 9, to 15. and say, *I was not like other men*: not once doubting of my salvation. I ever refused *to do what my Maker commanded*, and yet *confidently hoped to escape what he threatned*. Nor did I doubt of having *Christ my Redeemer* and *Advocate in the next life*, when I had been a *bitter enemy to him and his members in this life*. Here was blindness with a witness; as it is not to be believed how blind & blockish men are, that have onely the *flesh* for their *guide*; especially if they have *hardned their hearts*, and *seared* their *consciences* with a *customary sinning*. As I could give you for instance, a large *catalogue* of rare *Examples* how *sin* hath *befotted men*, and what *stark fools carnal men are in Spiritual things*, be they never so wise for mundane knowledg. But least it should be taken for a digression or excursion, you shall have a list of them by themselves, the which I will add as an *Appendix* to this *Discourse*, or *Dialogue*. In the mean time I have given you a brief of my manifold provocations, and great ingratitude, to my *Maker* and *Redeemer* (for otherwise I might be endless in the prosecution thereof.) It remains that I should in like manner lay open my *Original Defilement*; which is the *Fountain* whence all the

former (whether sins of *commission*, or sins of *omission*) do *flow*. But touching it, be pleased to peruse that small Tract, intituled, *A short and sure way to Grace and Salvation*: Or, *Three Fundamental Principles of Christian Religion*, by *R. T.* from *p.* 4 to *p.* 10.

Sect. 17. *Loose Libertine.* if this hath been your case, no wonder it hath startled you; for to deal plainly with you, as you have done with me; what I have heard from you, makes me tremble. For if such *honest moral men*, that live so *unreproveably* as you have done, go not to *Heaven*, what will become of me, that have been so *openly prophane*, and *notoriously wicked* all my time? Yea, it contented me not to doe wickedly my self, and to damn my own soul, but I have been the occasion of drawing hundreds to hell with me, by seducing some, and giving ill example to others, (the *infection of sin*, being much *worse than the act.*) As how many have I drawn to be *drunkards*, and *swearers*, and *whoremongers*, and *prophane persons*; Insomuch, that the blood of so many souls, as I have drawn away, will be required at my hands. Yea, my life hath been so debauch'd and licentious, that I have brought a *scandal upon the Gospel* and made it odious to the very *Turks* and *Infidels*, Rom. 2. 24.

Convert. Alas! what I *did* that was morally *good*, or what *evil I refrained*, was more for *self-ends*, or for *fear of mens Laws*, than for *love of Christs Gospel*. True, I went under the notion of an *honest man*, and a *good Christian*: I was *baptized* into the Faith, and made a *member of Christs visible Church*; but I was so far from endeavouring to *perform* what I then *promised*, that in effect I even *renounced* both *Christ*, and my *Baptism*, in persecuting him, & all that sincerely professed his Name, thinking I did *God good service* therein, *John* 16. 2 *Gal.* 1. 13, 14. *Phil.* 3. 6. Nor was it for want of ignorance, that you thought so of me: for by *nature* (be we never so mild and gentle) we are all the *seed of the serpent*, Gen. 3. 15. and *children of the Devil*, John 8. 44. Yea, the very best *moral man*, is but a *tame Devil*, as *Athanasius* well notes. But it is a true Proverb, *The blind eat many a Fly*, and *all Colours are alike to him that is in the dark.*

Loose Libertine. So much the worse is my condition; for my conscience tells me, that one is not a word you have spoken of your self, but I can justly apply the same unto my own soul, & a great

great deal more: for whereas you have been a *moral honeſt man*, ſo that none except your ſelf, could tax you for breaking either *Gods Law*, or mans: I have been ſo *wicked* and *prophane*, that I could moſt preſumptuouſly, and of ſet purpoſe, take a *pride in my wickedneſs, commit it with greedineſs, ſpeak of it, defend it, joy in it, boaſt of it, tempt, and inforce to it*; yea, *mock them that diſliked it*. As if I would ſend challenges into Heaven, and make love to deſtruction, and yet did applaud my ſelf, and prefer my own condition before other mens: ſaying, I was no diſſembler; yea, I hated the hypocriſie of *Profeſſors*: I do not juſtifie my ſelf, and deſpiſe others, like the *Puritans*: I am not factious, ſchiſmatical, ſingular, cenſorious, *&c.* I am not rebellious, nor contentious, like the *Browniſts* and *Anabaptiſts*. I am a *good fellow*, and *love an honeſt man with my heart*, &c. and as touching a *good conſcience*, I was never *troubled in mind*, as many ſcrupulous fools are. I have a *good heart*, and *mean as well* as the preciſeſt. But now I ſee the *Devil* and my own *deceitful heart* deluded me ſo, that my *whole life* hitherto, hath been but a *dream*, and that like a *blind man, I was running headlong to Hell*, when yet I thought my ſelf *in the way to Heaven*. Juſt as if a *Beggar* ſhould dream that he were a *King*; or as if a *Traytor* ſhould dream of his being *Crowned*, when indeed he was to be *beheaded*; the caſe of *Laodicea*, Rev. 3 17. the *young man* in the *Goſpel*, Luke 18.20,21. and that *Phariſee*, ſpoken of, *Luke* 18.11,12.

Sect. 18. *Convert.* It was not your caſe alone, but ſo it fares with the worſt of ſinners: Onely it much rejoyces me, that it hath pleaſed *God* to open your eyes, to ſee all this in your ſelf. For *fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto you*. Yea, we are *naturally ſo blind, and deaf, and dead in ſin, and in ſoul*, that we can no more diſcern our *ſpiritual filthineſs*, nor *feel ſin* to be a *burden*, than a blind *Ethiopian* can *ſee his own blackneſs*, or then a *dead man can feel the weight of a burden*, when it is laid upon him, *Acts* 28.27. *Iſa.* 6 9,10.

And this common *experience* ſhews; for if you obſerve it, who more *jocund, confident*, and *ſecure*, than the worſt of *ſinners*? They can ſtrut it under an unſupportable maſs of *Oaths, Blaſphemies, Theefts, Murders, Adulteries, Drunkenneſs*, and other

the like sins; yea, can easily *swallow* these *spiders* with *Mithridates*, and *digest* them too: when one that is regenerate *shrinks* under the *burden* of *wandring thoughts*, and *want of proficiency*. But why is it? They are *dead in sin*, Ephes. 2. 1. Revel. 3. 1. Now lay a *mountain* upon a *dead man*, he feels not once the *weight*.

To a *Christian* that hath the *life of grace*, the *least sin* lies *heavy* upon the conscience! but to him that is dead, let his sins be as *heavy* as a *mountain of lead*, he feels in them no weight at all.

Again they are insensible of their sin and danger, because ignorant; for, for *what the eye seeth not, the heart rueth not*. Security makes worldlings merry, and therefore are they secure, because they are ignorant. A dunce, we know, *seldom* makes *doubts*: Yea, a *fool*, says *Solomon*, *boasteth and is confident*, Prov. 14. 16. neither do *blind men ever blush*. And the truth is, were it not for *pride* and *ignorance*, a world of men would be ashamed to have their faces seen abroad. For take away from mens minds *vain opinions*, *flattering hopes*, *false valuations*, *imaginations*, and the like; you will leave the minds of most men and women, but poor *shrunken things*, *full of melancholy*, *indisposition*, and *unpleasing* to themselves. *Ignorance* is a *vail or curtain to hide away* their sins, wherupon they are never troubled in *conscience*, nor macerated with *cares* about *eternity*; but think that all will be well.

The *Devil* and the *Flesh* prophesie prosperity to sin; yea, *life* and *salvation*, as the *Pope* promised the *Powder Traytors*: but *Death* and *Damnation* (which *Gods Spirit* threatens) will prove the *crop* they will *reap*. For *God is true*, the *Devil* and all *Flesh* are *liars*.

When we become *regenerate*, and forsake sin; then the *devil* strongly and strangely assaults us, as he did *Christ*, when he was newly *baptized*; and *Pharaoh* the children of *Israel*, when they would forsake *Egypt*; and *Herod* the *children*, when *Christ* was come to deliver his people. Whence commonly it comes to pass, that those *think best of themselves*, *that have least cause*; yea, the true *Christian*, is as fearful *to entertain* a good opinion of himself, as the *false* is *unwilling* to be *driven* from it. They that have *store of grace* mourn for the want of it, and they that indeed *want it*, *chant their abundance*. None so apt to *doubt* their

their *Adoption*, as they that may be *assured* of it: nor none more usually *fear* then they that have the greatest *cause to hope*. We feel *corruption*, not by corruption, but by *Grace*, and therefore the more we *feel* our inward *corruption*, the *more Grace* we have.

Contraries, the nearer they are one to another, the sharper is the conflict betwixt them. Now of all enemies, the *Spirit* and the *Flesh* are nearest one to another, being both in the *Soul* of a regenerate man, and in all *faculties* of the *soul*, and in every *action* that springeth from those *faculties*. The more Grace, the more Spiritual life; and the more Spiritual life, the more antipathy to the contrary; whence none are so *sensible* of corruption, as those that have the most *Living Souls*.

Sect 19. Now for *Remedy* of the contrary, there cannot be a better *lesson* for carnal men to learn, than this, All the *promises of God* are *conditional*, to take place, if we *repent*; as all the *threatnings of God* are *conditional*, to take place, if we *repent not*. But wicked men, as they *believe without repenting*; their *Faith* being meer *presumption*: so they *repent without believing*, their repentance being indeed *Desperation*: and this observe, we are *cast down* in the disappointment of our hopes, in the same *measure*, as we were too much lifted up in expectation of *good* from them. Whence these peremptory presumers, if ever they repent, it is commonly as *Francis Spira*, an *Advocate* of *Padua*, did: and never did any man plead so well for *himself*, as he did *against himself*.

One Star is much *bigger* than the Earth, yet it seems many degrees *less*. It is the nature of *fear* to make *dangers greater*, *helps less* than they are. *Christ* hath promised peace and rest unto their souls that *labour*, and *are heavy laden*, and to those that *walk according to rule*, Mat. 11.29. Gal. 6.16. even *peace celestial* in the *state of grace*, and *peace eternal in the state of glory*. Such therefore as never were distressed in conscience, or live loosly, never had true *peace*. *Peace* is the *Daughter of Righteousness*, Rom. 5.1. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God*. But he who makes a *Bridge* of his own *shadow*, will be sure to *fall* into the *Water*.

Those

Thoſe *blocks*, that never in their life were moved with *Gods threatnings*, never in any ſtreight of conſcience, never groaned under the burden of *Gods anger*: they have not ſo much as entred into the *porch of this houſe*, or lift a foot over the *threſhold* of this *ſchool of repentance*. Oh! that we could but ſo much fear the eternal pains, as we do the temporary: and be but ſo careful to ſave our *ſouls* from torment, as our *bodies*. In the mean time, the caſe of theſe men is ſo much the worſe, by how much their *fear* is the leſs. It faring with the *ſoul*, as with the *body*. Thoſe *diſeaſes*, which do take away all ſenſe of pain, are of all others *moſt deſperate*. As the *dead palſie*, the *falling ſickneſs*, the *ſleepy lethargy*, &c. And the *patient* is moſt *dangerouſly ſick*, when he hath *no feeling* thereof. In like manner, whileſt they ſuppoſe themſelves to be free from *judgment*, they are already ſmitten with the *heavieſt of Gods judgments*, a heart that cannot repent, *Rom.* 2. 5.

In a *Lethargy*, it is needful the *Patient* ſhould be caſt into a *burning Feaver*, becauſe the *ſenſes* are *benummed*, and this will *waken them*, and *dry up* the *beſotting humours*. So in our dead ſecurity, before our converſion, *God* is fain to let the Law, Sin, Conſcience, and Satan *looſe* upon us, and to kindle the very *fire* of *Hell* in our ſouls, that ſo we might be rouſed out of our ſecurity: but thouſands of theſe blocks both live and depart with as great hopes, as men go to a Lottery, even *dreaming* of *Heaven*, until they *awake* in *Hell*. For they too often die without any remorſe of conſcience, like *blocks*; or as an *Ox dies in a ditch*. Yea, thouſands that *live* like *Laban*, *die* like Nabal, (which is but the ſame word inverted) whileſt others, the dear children of *God*, die in diſtreſs of Conſcience. For it is not every good mans hap to die like *Antonius Pius*, whoſe *death* was after the faſhion and ſemblance of a kindly and *pleaſant ſleep*. However St. *Auſtins* rule will be ſure to hold, He cannot *die ill*, that hath *lived well*; and for the moſt part, He that *lives conſcionably*, *dies comfortably*, and departeth rich. And ſo you ſee how it fares with the wickedeſt and worſt of men. Wherefore if you are truly ſenſible of your wretchedneſs, it is a good ſign, that you are in ſome forwardneſs to be recovered: and really to become ſo good, as formerly you but dreamed, or imagined your

ſelf

ſelf to be. And indeed the very *firſt ſtep to grace*, is to *feel the want of grace*, and the next way to *receive mercy*, is to ſee your *ſelf miſerable*. Therefore our conſtant and moſt diligent ſearch ſhould be to find out the naughtineſs of our own hearts; and to get ſtrength from *God* againſt our prevailing corruptions.

Sect. 20. *Looſe Libertine.* But is there any hope for one ſo wicked as I? who have *turned the grace of God into wantonneſs*, applying *Chriſts paſſion* as a *warrant* for my licentiouſneſs, not as a *remedy*, and taking *his death* as a *license* to *ſin*, his *Croſs* as a *Letters patent* to do *miſchief*. As if a man ſhould *head his drum of rebellion with his pardon*. For I have moſt ſpightfully, and malitiouſly taken up *Arms* againſt my *Maker*, and *fought* againſt my *Redeemer* all my dayes.

Convert. Do but unfeignedly *repent you of your ſins*, and *forſake your former evill wayes, and lay hold upon Chriſt by a true and lively faith*; my ſoul for yours, *God* is very ready to forgive them, be they never *ſo many*, and innumerable for *multitude*; never ſo *hainous* for *quality* and *magnitude*. Yea, I can ſhew you your Pardon from the great King of *Heaven*, for all that is paſt, the which you may read at large, *Iſa.* 55.7. *Ezek.* 18.21, to 29. and 33.11. *Joel* 2.12,13,14. Yea, read 1 *Cor.* 6.10,11. together with the ſtory of *Manaſſes*, *Mary Magdalen*, the *Thief*, and the *Prodigal Son*; and you ſhall ſee *preſidents* thereof. Yea, the very *murderers* of the *Son of God*, upon their ſerious and unfeigned repentance, and ſtedfaſt believing in him, received *pardon* and *ſalvation*. And indeed *deſpair* is a ſin which never knew *Jeſus*. True every *ſin* deſerves *damnation*; but no ſin ſhall *condemn*, but the *lying* and *continuing* in it. True repentance is ever bleſt with forgiveneſs. And know this that *Gods mercy* is greater than *thy ſin*, whatever it be: you cannot be ſo *infinite in ſinning*, as he is *infinite in pardoning*, if you repent; yea, ſins upon repentance are ſo *remitted*, as if they had never been *committed*. *I will put away thy tranſgreſſions as a cloud, and thy ſins as a miſt*, *Iſa.* 44.22. And what by *corruption* hath been done, by *repentance* is undone. As the former examples witneſs. *Come and let us Reaſon together*, *ſaith the Lord*, *though your ſins be as ſcarlet they ſhall be as white as ſnow*, Iſa. 1.18. Yea, *whiter* than *ſnow*. For the Prophet

Prophet *David*, laying open his *blood guiltines*, and his *original impurity*, useth these words, *Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow*, Psal. 51.7. And in reason, did *Christ* come to call *sinners* to repentance? and shall he not shew mercy to the *penitent*? Or, who would not cast his *burden* upon him, that desires to give *ease*? *As I live, saith the Lord, I would not the death of a sinner*, Ezek. 18.32. and 33.11.

Onely, *apply* not this *salve*, before the *ulcer* be searched to the bottome: Lay not hold upon *mercy*, until thou be'st throughly *humbled*. The onely way to become *good*, is, first to believe that you are *evil*, and by *accusing* our selves, we prevent *Satan*; by *judging* our selves, we prevent *God*.

Are we as sick of *sorrow*, as we are of *sin*? Then may we hopefully go to the *Physitian of our Souls*, who came into the World onely to *cure the sick*, and to give *light* to them onely, *who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of Death*. *God* does not pour the *Oyl of Grace*, but into a *broken and contrite Heart*.

Wouldest thou get out of the miserable estate of Nature, into the blessed estate of Grace? and of *Satans bond-slave*, become the *Child of God*, and a *Member of Christ*? Wouldest thou truly know thine own Heart? and be very sensible how evil and wicked it is? that so thou mayest have a more humble conceit of thy self? Lay to heart these three particulars: 1. The *corruption of our nature*, by reason of *original sin*. 2. Our manifold *breach of Gods Righteous Law, by actual sin*. 3. The *guilt* and *punishment* due to us for them *both*. This being done, thou wilt see and finde thy *necessity* of a *Redeemer*. And it is *Thirst* onely that makes us relish our *Drink*, *Hunger* our *meat*: The *full Stomack of a Pharisee*, surcharged with the superfluities of his own Merits, *will loath the Honey-comb of* Christs *Righteousness*. This was it which made the *Young Prodigal* to relish even servants fare, though before wanton, when full fed at home. No more relish feels the *Pharisaical heart* in *Christs blood*, than in a chip: But O how acceptable is the *Fountain of living Waters*, to the *chafed Heart panting and braying*? The *blood of Christ*, to the weary and tired soul; to the thirsty Conscience scorched with the sense of *Gods* wrath: He that presents him with it, how welcome is he? even as a special choice man, one of a thousand. And the deeper the sense of Misery is, the sweeter the sense of Mercy is.

Sect. 21. Then if you would be satisfied for time to come, whether your Repentance and Conversion be true and sound, these particulars will infallibly inform you. If you shall persevere (when this trouble for sin is over) in doing that which now you purpose, it is an infallible signe your Repentance is sound, otherwise not. If thou doest call to minde the *Vow* which thou madest in *Baptism*, and doest thy endeavour to perform that which then thou didst promise. If thou doest square thy life according to the *Rule of Gods* Word, and not after the *Rudiments* of the World. If thou art willing to forsake *all sin*, without reserving one, (for otherwise that *one sin*, may prove the *base* of all thy *Graces*, even as *Gideon* had *seventy sons*,

sons, and but one *Bastard*, and yet that *Bastard* destroyed *all* the rest that were legitimate, *Judg.* 9. 5.) Sin is like the *Ivy* in the *wall*, cut off *bough*, *branch*, *body*, *stump*, yet some Sprigs or other will sprout out again: Till the *Root* be pluckt up, or the *wall* be pulled down and ruined, it will never utterly die.

Regeneration or *New-birth*, is a *creation of new qualities* in the soul; as being by nature onely evil disposed. *Gods* children are known by this mark, *They walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 1. If *Christ* have called you to his service, your life will appear more spiritual and excellent than others.

As for your *sails*, it is a sign that *sin* hath not gained your *consent*, but committed a *Rape* upon your *Soul*, when you cry out to *God*. If the *ravished Virgin* under the Law *cryed out*, she was pronounced *guiltless*. A *sheep* may *fall* into the *mire*, but a *swine delights* to *wallow* in the *mire*. Great difference between a *woman* that is *forced*, though she cries out and strives, and an alluring *Adultress*.

Again, the thoughts of the *godly*, are *godly*, of the *wicked*, *worldly*; and by these, good and evil men are best, and truliest differenced one from another. Would we know our own hearts, and whether they be changed by a new birth: Examine we our *thoughts*, *words*, *actions*, *passions*, especially our *thoughts* will inform us, for these cannot be subject to hypocrisie, as words and deeds are.

Sect. 22. Then by way of *Caution*, know, That a *Childe* may as soon *create it self*, as a *man* in the *state of nature*, *regenerate himself*. We cannot act in the least, unless *God* bestows upon us daily *privative grace* to *defend* us from *evil*, and daily *positive grace*, *enabling us* to do *good*. And those that are of *Christs* teaching, know both from the *word*, and by *Experience*, that of themselves they are not onely *weak*, but *even dead* to what is *good*, *moving* no more than they are *moved*; that their *best works are faulty*, all their *sins deadly*, all their *Natures corrupted originally*. *You hath he quickned, that were dead in trespasses and sins*, Eph. 2. 1. Yea, we are altogether so *dead in sin*, that we cannot stir the least *joynt*, no not so much as feel our *own deadness*, nor *desire life*, except *God* be pleased to raise and restore our *souls*, from the *death of sin*, and *grave of long custom*, to the *life of grace*. Apt we are to all *evil*, but reprobate and indisposed to all *Grace* and *Goodness*; yea, to all the means thereof.

My Powers are all corrupt, corrupt my will:
Marble to good, but Wax to what is ill.

Insomuch, that we are *not sufficient* of our selves *to think*, much less *to speak*, least of all *to do* that which is *good*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. John 15. 4, 5. If we have *power* to *chuse* or *refuse* the object, to do these well we have no power. We have *ability*, we have *will* enough, *to undo our selves*, *scope* enough *Hell-ward*; but neither *motion*, nor *will to do good*, that must be put into us by him that gives both *power and will*, and *power to will*.

Finally,

Finally, Each ſanctified heart feels this, but no words are able ſufficiently to expreſs, what impotent wretches we are, when we are not ſuſtained. So that we have *no merit*, but the *mercy of God* to ſave us: nothing but *the blood of Chriſt*, and his mediation *to cleanſe and Redeem us*: nothing but *his obedience to inrich us*. As for our *good works*, we are altogether beholding to *God* for them, not *God* to us, nor we to our ſelves, becauſe they are only *his works in us*.

Whatſoever thou *art*, thou *oweſt* to him that *made thee*: whatever thou haſt, thou *oweſt* to him that *Redeemed thee*. Therefore if we do any thing amiſs, let us *accuſe our ſelves*: if any thing well, let us give all *the praiſe to God*. And indeed, this is the *teſt* of a *true* or *falſe Religion*: that which teacheth us to *exalt God* moſt, and moſt to *depreſs our ſelves* is the true: that which doth moſt *prank up* our ſelves, and detract from *God*, is the *falſe*, as *Bonaventure* well notes.

Sect. 23. Now to wind up with a Word of *Exhortation*; If thou beeſt convinced, and reſolveſt upon a new courſe; let thy reſolution be peremptory and conſtant, and take heed you harden not again, as *Pharaoh*, the *Philiſtines*, the *Young man* in the *Goſpel*, *Pilate* and *Judas* did: reſemble not the *Iron*, which is no longer *ſoft*, than it is in the *Fire*; for *that good* (ſaith *Gregory*) will do us *no good*, which is not *made good by perſeverance*. If with theſe premonitions, the *Spirit* hath vouchſafed to ſtir up in thine heart any good motions, and holy purpoſes to obey *God*, in letting thy ſins go; *Quench not*, grieve not the *ſpirit*, 1 Theſ. 5. 19. *Return* not with the *Dog* to thy *vomit*, leaſt thy *latter end* prove *ſeven-fold worſe than thy beginning*, Mat. 12. 43, 45. Oh it is a fearful thing to receive the grace of God in vain! and a *deſperate thing*, being warned of a *Rock*, wilfully to caſt our ſelves upon it. Neither let *Satan* perſwade you to deſer your repentance; no not an hour, leſt your *Reſolution* proves as a *falſe conception*, which never comes to *bearing*. Beſides, death may be ſudden: even the leaſt of a thouſand things can kill you, and give you no leiſure to be ſick.

Thirdly, If thou wilt be ſafe from *evil works*, avoid the *occaſions*; have no fellowſhip with the workers of iniquity: neither fear their ſcoffes; for this be ſure of, If your perſon and wayes *pleaſe God*, the *world* will be *diſpleaſed* with both: If *God* be your *friend*, *men* will be your *enemies*: if they exerciſe their *malice*, it is where he ſhews *mercy*. But take heed of loſing *Gods* favour to keep theirs.

Beda tells of a *Great man*, that was admoniſhed by his friends in his ſickneſs to repent: who anſwered, He would not yet; for that if he ſhould recover, his friends and companions would laugh at him: but growing ſicker and ſicker, they again preſt him; but then his anſwer was, That it was now too late; for I am judged and condemned already.

A man cannot be a *Nathanael*, *in whoſe heart there is no guile*, but the World counts him a *fool*. But *Chriſt* ſayes, *Verily except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye ſhall not enter into the Kingdome of Heaven*, Matth. 18. 3.

Again,

Again, *Satan* and your deceitful heart will ſuggeſt unto you, that a *Religious life*, is a *dimpiſh* and *melancholy life*: but holy *David* will tell you, *That light is ſown to the Righteous, and joy to the upright*, Pſal. 97. 11. Iſa. 65. 14. And experience tells us, that *Earthly* and *Bodily joyes*, are but the *body*, or rather the *dregs* of that *joy*, which *Gods* people feel and are raviſhed with. As Oh the calm, and quietneſs of a good Conſcience! the aſſurance of the pardon of ſin, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt, the honeſty of a virtuous and holy life, how ſweet they are! Yea, even *Plato*, an *Heathen* could ſay, That if Wiſdome and Virtue could but repreſent it ſelf to the Eyes, it would ſet the heart on fire with the love of it. And the like of a ſinners ſadneſs, as hear what *Seneca* ſayes; If there were no *God to puniſh him, no Devil to torment him, no Hell to burn him, no man to ſee him*; yet would he not ſin, for the uglineſs and filthineſs of ſin, and the guilt and ſadneſs of his Conſcience. But Experience is the beſt informer: wherefore take the counſel of holy *David*, Pſalm 34. 8. *O taſte and ſee! that the Lord is good, bleſſed is the man that truſteth in him.* To which accordeth that of holy *Bernard*, *Good* art thou, *O Lord*, to the ſoul that *ſeeks thee*; what art thou then, to the ſoul that *findes thee?* As I may appeal to any mans Conſcience, that hath been ſoftned with the Unction of Grace, and truly taſted of the powers of the World to come, to him that hath the *love of God ſhed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghoſt*; whether his whole life be not a perpetual *Hallelujah* in compariſon of his natural condition: Whence they are able to ſlight all ſuch objections, as he did. You tell me that ſcrupling of ſmall matters, is but ſtumbling at ſtraws, that they be but trifles: when I know your tongue can tell nothing but truth, I will believe you.

Fifthly, Beg of God that he will give you a *new heart*, and when the *heart* is changed, all the *members* will follow after it, as the reſt of the *creatures* after the *Sun* when it *ariſeth*. But without a work upon the heart, wrought by the ſpirit of God, it will follow its own inclination to that which it affecteth, whatſoever the judgment ſhall ſay to the contrary. That muſt be firſt *reformed*, which was firſt *deformed*. It is idle, and to no purpoſe to purge the *chaanel*, when the *fountain* is corrupt. Whence the *Apoſtle* orderly bids us, firſt, *Be renewed in the Spirit of our mindes*; and then, *Let him that ſtole, ſteal no more*, Epheſ. 4. 23, 24. Yea, it is Gods own counſel to the men of *Jeruſalem*, Jer. 4. *Waſh thy heart from wickedneſs: that thou mayeſt be ſaved*, verſe 14. It is moſt ridiculous to apply *Remedies* to the outward parts, when the *diſtemper* lies in the ſtomack. To what purpoſe is it to *crop off* the top of *weeds*, or *lop off the boughes* of the *Tree*, when the *Root* and *Stalk* remain in the Earth? As cut off the *ſprig* of a Tree, it growes ſtill; a Bough, an Arm, ſtill it growes; lop off the top; yea, ſaw it in the midſt, yet it will grow again; ſtock it up by the roots, then (and not till then) it will grow no more: Whence it is that God ſaith, *Give me thine heart*, Prov. 23. 26. *Great Cities* once expunged, the *dorps* and *villages* will ſoon come in of themſelves: the *heart* is the *treaſury* and *ſtor-houſe* of wickedneſs, *Matt.* 12. 34.

ſuch

such as the heart is, such are the actions of the body which proceed from it, *Mat.*12.35. Therefore as *Christ* saith, *Make clean within, and all will be clean*, otherwise not, *Mat.*23.26. therefore *Davids* prayer is, *Create in me a new heart, O Lord and renew a right spirit within me*, Ps.51.10. Do thou the like, importune him for grace, that you may firmly *resolve*, speedily *begin*, and continually *persevere*, in doing and suffering his holy will: desire him to *inform* and *reform* you so, that you may neither *mis-believe*, nor *mis-live*, to change and purifie your *nature*, *subdue* your *reason*, *rectifie* your *judgment*, *reform* and strengthen your *will*, *renew* your *affections*, and beat down in you whatsoever stands in opposition to the *Scepter of Jesus Christ*.

Sixthly and lastly, If you receive any power against your former corruptions, forget not to be *thankful*, yea, study all possible thankfulness; for that you and I are not at this present *frying in Hell flames*, never to be freed; that we have the offer of *Grace here*, and *Glory hereafter*, it is his unspeakable goodness. And there is nothing more *pleasing* to God, nor *profitable to us*, both for the *procuring of the good we want*, or *continuing the good we have*, than thankfulness. He will sow there (and there onely) *plenty of his blessings*, where he is sure to reap *plenty of thanks* and *service*. But who will *sow* those barren *sands*, where they are sure not onely to be without all hope of a good *harvest*, but are sure to lose both their *seed* and *labour*? *Consider what hath been said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.*

And so much for the *Second Part*. *An Appendix* follows wherein you may have instances of all sorts, how *sin besots Men*.

FINIS.

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